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Letter dated 31 January 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 24 January 2017 from the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union Commission, Smaïl Chergui, on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma (see annex), forwarding the communiqué on the situation in Somalia and the implementation of the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia of the 649th meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, held on 16 January 2017, and the report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, transmitted in accordance with the requests of the Security Council contained in paragraphs 18 and 44 of its resolution 2297 (2016).

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

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Annex

On behalf of the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, I would like to forward, herewith attached, the communiqué on the situation in Somalia and the implementation of the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia (see enclosure I), adopted by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union at its 649th meeting, held on 16 January 2017, and the report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (see enclosure II).

I should appreciate it if the present letter, the communiqué and the report would be circulated to the members of the United Nations Security Council.

(*Signed*) Smaïl **Chergui**
Commissioner for Peace and Security

Enclosure I

Communiqué on the situation in Somalia and the implementation of the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union, at its 649th meeting, held on 16 January 2017, adopted the following decision on the basis of its consideration of the report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the situation in Somalia and the implementation of the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM):

The Council,

1. **Takes note** of the report of the Chairperson of the Commission and the briefing made by the Commissioner for Peace and Security on the situation in Somalia and the implementation of the AMISOM mandate, **also takes note** of the statements made by the representatives of Somalia and Ethiopia, as Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and as African member of the United Nations Security Council, as well as by the representatives of Egypt, China, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, the European Union and the United Nations;

2. **Recalls** its previous decisions on the situation in Somalia and AMISOM, including communiqué PSC/PR/COMM(DCXXII) adopted at its 622nd meeting, held on 6 September 2016, communiqué PSC/PR/COMM(DCVIII) adopted at its 608th meeting, held on 29 June 2016, and communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.2(DXCV) adopted at its 595th meeting, held on 28 April 2016;

3. **Expresses satisfaction** with the progress made by the Federal Government of Somalia in the electoral process in Somalia, in this respect, **welcomes** the establishment of a Bicameral Assembly composed of Upper and Lower Houses, as well as the re-election on 11 January 2017 of Mohamed Sheihk Osman Jawaari as the Speaker of the Ninth Parliament, in the same context, and **commends** the commitment of the Somalia National Leadership Forum, the Federal Indirect Electoral Implementation Team, the State-level Indirect Electoral Implementation Team, the independent electoral dispute resolution mechanism and other national stakeholders to this electoral process, and the election of women representatives in the House of Parliament;

4. **Stresses** the importance of ensuring that all allegations of malpractice and manipulated voting are objectively addressed and, **looks forward** to the completion of the electoral process through the election of a President as scheduled and without any further delays, and **commends** the Somalia National Security Forces and AMISOM personnel for their valour, professionalism and effectiveness in supporting this electoral process, which is ongoing without major incidents, especially around the six designated electoral locations;

5. **Welcomes** the achievements made in the state formation process in Somalia, in this regard, **notes with satisfaction** the conclusion, on 17 October 2016, of the formation of the Hirshabelle regional administration whose Assembly elected the Regional President, Vice-President, Speaker and Deputy Speaker, which marks the formal completion of the establishment of federal member states in Somalia,

reiterates its full support to the Federal Government of Somalia for these remarkable achievements, and **encourages** regional and international actors to continue to work in a coordinated and coherent manner, in order to consolidate the gains made in the country;

6. **Expresses deep concern** over the continued threats posed by Al-Shabaab to peace and security in Somalia and the region, through recurrent asymmetrical attacks, in this regard, **strongly condemns** these attacks, in particular, **takes note** of the incident, which occurred on 2 January 2017, outside the medina gate and at an entrance of a hotel in Mogadishu, **expresses its condolences** to the families of the Somalia National Security Forces personnel who lost their lives, and **wishes** quick recovery to those who sustained injuries;

7. **Notes with deep concern** some incidents of reoccupation by Al-Shabaab in some key towns in the Hirshabelle region (Moqokori, Ceel Cali, Halgan) and the Bakool region (Tiyeeglow town, Goof gadood), and **stresses** the need for AMISOM and the Somalia National Security Forces to step up their efforts in the recovery and consolidation of security in territories liberated from Al-Shabaab;

8. **Expresses satisfaction** with the implementation of the 2016 AMISOM concept of operations, **requests** the Commission and AMISOM to spare no effort in ensuring that all operations are conducted in accordance with it and within the proposed timelines and, in this respect, **decides** to request the United Nations Security Council to authorize an AMISOM troop surge of 4,500 for a non-renewable period of six months, in order to undertake AMISOM mandated tasks as set out in the 2016 concept of operations, especially in relation to the expansion of offensive operations, as well as facilitate the exit strategy of the Mission;

9. **Calls upon** the international community to continue to provide and increase its support to AMISOM and the Somalia National Security Forces commensurate with the challenges being faced in their efforts to promote and consolidate peace and security in Somalia;

10. **Recalls** that, when the African Union authorized the deployment of AMISOM in January 2007, it was on the understanding that AMISOM would only be deployed for a period of six months, aimed essentially at contributing to the initial stabilization phase in Somalia and that, thereafter, the Mission would evolve into a United Nations operation that would support the long-term stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction of Somalia, in this context, **requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to urgently undertake strategic consultations to explore various funding options for AMISOM, including through the convening of a high-level tripartite meeting of the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations to explore modalities for addressing the current funding challenges facing AMISOM, and **also requests** the Commission to engage the European Union with a view to finding a consensual solution to the payment of allowances to troops of Burundi in AMISOM, based on a non-discriminatory approach, bearing in mind the particular nature of AMISOM operations, and in accordance with the conclusions of the 21st meeting of the AMISOM Military Operations Coordination Committee, held in Addis Ababa on 11 November 2016;

11. **Pays tribute** to all AMISOM uniformed and civilian personnel, as well as to the troop- and police-contributing countries, namely Burundi, Djibouti,

Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda, for their continued commitment and the sacrifices made thus far, **urges** AMISOM troop-contributing countries to maintain their presence in Somalia in accordance with the timeline of deployment as contained in the AMISOM concept of operations in order to avoid creating a security vacuum and other related negative consequences, and **reiterates** the centrality of African solidarity as enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the main impetus for AMISOM deployment;

12. **Underlines the importance** of a sustainable and coordinated approach for building the capacity of the Somalia National Security Forces and **requests** the Commission and AMISOM to work with the Federal Government of Somalia, the United Nations and other relevant stakeholders in all efforts to build the capacity of the Somalia National Security Forces, with a view to developing a more sustainable, robust and effective immediate, medium- and long-term strategy;

13. **Commends** the AMISOM leadership and the troop- and police-contributing countries for their continued efforts to ensure full compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law in the conduct of the Mission's military operations, including the prompt establishment of boards of inquiry and other necessary mechanisms to investigate allegations of violations by AMISOM uniformed personnel and the adoption, where applicable, of appropriate sanctions against the perpetrators, in line with the relevant provisions of the memorandums of understanding signed between the African Union and the troop- and police-contributing countries, and in the same context, **reaffirms** the zero-tolerance policy of the African Union for sexual exploitation and abuse;

14. **Recalls** paragraph 11 of the communiqué adopted at its 622nd meeting, and **requests** the Commission and AMISOM to finalize the 10-year lessons learned study on AMISOM, which is expected to make concrete recommendations on the future of AMISOM presence in Somalia;

15. **Requests** the Commission to transmit this communiqué and the report of the Chairperson of the Commission on Somalia and the implementation of the AMISOM mandate to the United Nations Secretary-General for onward transmission to the United Nations Security Council for its action as appropriate;

16. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

Enclosure II

Report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on the situation in Somalia and the implementation of the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraphs 18 and 44 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2297 (2016), adopted at its 7731st meeting, held on 7 July 2016. In that resolution, the Security Council requested the African Union to keep the Council regularly informed, through the Secretary-General, on the implementation of the Mission's mandate, and regularly report to the Council, through the provision of oral updates and written reports. In addition, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, at its 608th meeting, held in Addis Ababa on 29 June 2016, reiterated the need for the periodic reporting on AMISOM operations, including on the implementation of the revised concept of operations. Accordingly, the present report covers major developments in Somalia during the period from 1 September to 31 December 2016.

II. Main political and related developments

2. Somalia continues to make significant political progress in particular in relation to the federalization and electoral processes. With respect to the federalization process, the Hiraan-Middle Shabelle interregional state formation conference concluded on 17 October with the formation of the Hirshabelle regional administration, whose Assembly elected the Regional President, Vice-President, Speaker and Deputy Speaker. This milestone benefitted from the support and commitment of a high-level joint committee, comprising the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the United Nations, the European Union and the Federal Government of Somalia. In addition to political support, AMISOM provided protection for all stakeholders involved in the reconciliation and state formation process, in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolution 2297 (2016). The state formation process has now shifted to the formalization of the six interim administrations into federal member states and the establishment of functional local governments within the states in line with the 2020 Somali political road map.

3. I am happy to note that the conduct and outcome of the unique 2016 electoral process provides an important stepping stone towards universal suffrage in Somalia. An important outcome from this process is that Somalia now has a bicameral assembly and is working towards the selection of a new President by the end of January 2017. In support of the process, the African Union Commission deployed a short-term electoral support mission to Somalia to observe, assess the process and provide surge support and expert advice to AMISOM political leadership. Furthermore, AMISOM, in collaboration with other international partners, continues to engage with the relevant stakeholders, including the Federal Government, the Somalia National Leadership Forum, the Federal Indirect Electoral Implementation Team, the state-level indirect electoral implementation team, the independent

electoral dispute resolution mechanism, Somali women representatives and Coalition for Change, among others, in order to address various election-related issues, such as ensuring security during elections, the achievement of the quota of seats in parliament reserved for women and the settlement of electoral disputes.

4. In line with its mandated responsibilities, the Mission continues to ensure the security of the 2016 electoral process, which is ongoing without major incidents. Within its capabilities, AMISOM adopted a two-pronged approach in its support to the electoral process through the provision of a safe and peaceful environment, as well as advocacy and the sensitization and mobilization of Somalis towards inclusive participation in the electoral process. Overall, AMISOM support to the entire conduct of the electoral process has been remarkably successful.

III. Security situation

5. The general security situation remains relatively calm, despite the recurrent asymmetric attacks of Al-Shabaab. Generally, Al-Shabaab has maintained some presence in the Lower and Middle Juba, including the Juba Valley, Gedo, Bay, Bakool, Lower and Middle Shabelle and Hiraan regions, and along the north-eastern coastline, where it poses a potential threat to the Federal Government of Somalia, regional administrations, the Somalia National Security Forces, AMISOM and partners. Nonetheless, AMISOM forces, together with the Somalia National Security Forces, continue to recover, pacify and consolidate large territories in areas previously controlled by Al-Shabaab.

6. In addition, the asymmetric nature of the modus operandi of Al-Shabaab continues to adversely affect the economy and the provision of social services and infrastructure. While Al-Shabaab and other opposition armed groups continue to pose a challenge to security in Somalia, AMISOM forces have maintained a presence in the six sectors and have been conducting military operations against Al-Shabaab within their area of responsibility.

7. There have also been some incidents of the re-emergence of Al-Shabaab in some key towns, following the withdrawal of non-AMISOM forces. In this respect, Al-Shabaab retook a number of towns in the Hirshabelle region, namely Moqokori, Ceel Cali and Halgan. Al-Shabaab also recaptured Tiyeeglow town in the Bakool region and overran the defensive position of the Somali National Army at Goof Gadood in the Bay region on 29 October. These incidents suggest that the lack of sustained holding operations will continue to undermine security gains in the country.

8. Rising tensions in Galkacyo remain a source of concern. On 7 October 2016, forces loyal to the Puntland and Galmudug regional administrations engaged in a violent confrontation, leading to the loss of lives and population displacements. An agreement between the parties was signed in Abu Dhabi on 1 November, where the two Presidents reaffirmed their commitment to the ceasefire and pledged to work towards the separation of forces and reconciliation. With the support of AMISOM, the European Union, IGAD and the United Nations, a joint ceasefire committee was established between the warring parties to oversee the implementation of the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities in Galkacyo.

9. There were few violent incidents related to the electoral process. The ongoing electoral process has been conducted in an environment that has been relatively safe and conducive to the conduct of the process, and it has progressed well in all host regional capitals. Consistent with the election security provided in all these host regional capitals, AMISOM developed effective security plans to secure the elections of the Speaker of the Federal Parliament and the President of Somalia, scheduled for January 2017. The elections will present a critical phase that is likely to attract more Al-Shabaab activities.

10. Amid this progress, political, security and stabilization efforts for Somalia have been undermined by limited national and grass-roots reconciliation processes, intermittent inter- and intraclan regional administration clashes and tension arising from the electoral process. Equally, Al-Shabaab continues to employ insurgency, asymmetric tactics, radicalization, religious extremism and child recruitment as its modus operandi. It continues to exploit existing gaps across sectors by conducting ambushes, grenade attacks and indirect mortar attacks and the use of improvised explosive devices and vehicle borne improvised explosive devices combined with complex attacks targeting civilians, government officials, AMISOM and members of the international community.

IV. Deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia

11. Besides the deployment activities as contained in my previous report, AMISOM is pleased to report that the Force Commander, who is a national of Djibouti, has since been deployed to the mission area to further enhance command and control structures and, ultimately, the successful implementation of the Mission's mandate.

12. As set out in the 2016 AMISOM concept of operations, AMISOM continues to maintain the deployment of authorized uniformed personnel and their presence in all sectors. This is aimed at establishing the conditions necessary for effective and legitimate governance across Somalia, in support of and in coordination with the existing Somali security forces.

13. Under United Nations Security Council resolution 2297 (2016), a joint AMISOM-United Nations-Somalia planning mechanism is envisaged to assess and facilitate the delivery of the Mission's mandate. In this regard, during the monthly senior leadership coordination forum held on 24 November 2016, discussions were initiated to provide modalities for the transition over the next two to four years. In this respect, and as part of the preparation to handover all the relevant security responsibilities to the Somalia National Security Forces, AMISOM, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) agreed to set up a joint team to discuss and establish a workable condition-based exit strategy and a transition plan, based on a common understanding by all concerned.

14. Since my previous report, notable efforts have been made to improve the efficiency of AMISOM through the deployment of force multipliers (combat helicopters) and mission enabling units. With the finalization of the signing of the letter of assistance with the Government of Kenya in November 2016, and the subsequent expected deployment of Kenya Defence Forces combat helicopters from 15 December, together with the requisite training programmes, will lead to

enhanced improvement of AMISOM military efficiency and response capacity. Through the mission enabling units, AMISOM is conducting Operation Antelope within sector 5, which is designed to open up an initial 87 kilometres of the 200 kilometres of main supply routes in the Mission's area of responsibility. The successful completion of the operation will enhance security on the main supply routes, which will allow for the provision of humanitarian assistance and the delivery of logistical support to AMISOM.

V. Support from the African Union Mission in Somalia to the Somalia National Security Forces

15. AMISOM continues to support the capacity-building and enhancement of the effectiveness of the Somalia National Security Forces, especially the national army and the Somali Police Force, as lead organs for taking over from AMISOM upon its exit. The reorganization of the national army, as part of the implementation of the Guulwade plan, which provides for the creation of well-organized and equipped national army units, is in process, although it lacks the required resources. The process of reforming and restructuring the national police force remains fundamental for the long-term stabilization process of Somalia. Significant efforts have been made to ensure the conduct of joint operations with the national security forces, as part of the implementation of the national security plan and to contribute to the wider effort in training and mentoring the security forces. In fact, AMISOM, together with the national police force, carried out several joint operations, including day and night patrols in Mogadishu and a number of joint cordon and search operations, leading to the arrest of Al-Shabaab suspects and the capture of materials for making explosives. The role of AMISOM, including the police component, has also been manifested in the conduct of electoral assessments, support to elections security and the training of the national police force, both in Mogadishu and other electoral locations.

16. To improve coordination, communication and intelligence-sharing during the election period, AMISOM supported the national police, the national army and other security forces in developing joint election security plans, establishing joint security committees and joint operations centres. The joint security plans led to the successful completion of both Upper and Lower House elections in the states of Jubaland and South-West. In the same vein, AMISOM continues to provide election security to other states, which have yet to complete their electoral processes.

VI. Protection of civilians and compliance with the United Nations human rights due diligence policy

17. In line with its mandate, AMISOM has established structures to ensure that its forces discharge their mandate in accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law. During the period under review, the new Force Commander issued a directive to his operational commanders reminding them of their obligations under the various conventions under human rights and international humanitarian law. The Mission's Protection, Human Rights and Gender Unit has taken advantage of the monthly briefing of the

Force Commander with his commanders to make presentations to the sector and operational commanders on various issues relating to human rights and international humanitarian law.

18. The AMISOM-United Nations joint working group to discuss the implementation of the human rights due diligence policy has strengthened its periodic engagements. Similarly, the Civilian Casualty Tracking Analysis and Response Cell has been operationalized, with regular reporting communicated to the AMISOM and African Union Commission leadership. Where credible allegations of abuse have been raised, the Mission has always promptly set up a board of inquiry to investigate such allegations and shared the relevant findings with partners, as appropriate. In a bid to strengthen the operational credibility of the Analysis and Response Cell, AMISOM, with the support of UNSOS in October 2016, developed standard operating procedures for the modalities of making ex gratia payments to innocent civilian victims of its operations.

19. AMISOM conceived and supported the establishment of a Crisis Line, which was launched in December 2016 and operates within Somalia to report cases of sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse. The management of the Crisis Line was subcontracted to an independent Somali non-governmental organization and operates a toll-free telephone number (5555) using the practice of active listening, recording of information on violations and referrals of victims to services and/or the appropriate authorities for necessary action. This AMISOM-funded initiative is part of the established monitoring and response mechanism aimed at breaking the silence regarding sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse and any other forms of abuse perpetrated against women and children.

VII. Implementation of the revised concept of operations and outcomes of operations of the African Union Mission in Somalia

20. Noticeable progress has been registered with regard to AMISOM efforts to degrade the capabilities of Al-Shabaab. AMISOM forces have continued to make considerable territorial gains in order to separate Al-Shabaab from the populations who constitute its centre of gravity and deny them resources in the form of revenue, recruitment and logistics support. Concretely, AMISOM forces, jointly with the Somalia National Security Forces, conducted several intelligence-led operations, during which a total of 420 Al-Shabaab militants were killed and 117 others were captured. In addition, 177 AK-47s, 15 PKM machine guns, 10 rocket-propelled grenades, three pistols, 12 hand grenades and 5,682 rounds of 7.62 mm ammunitions were captured. Along the main supply routes, a total of 100 improvised explosive devices have been discovered and successfully destroyed across the sectors.

21. Significant efforts have been made to ensure free movement, safe passage and protection of those involved in the peace and reconciliation processes, as well as the electoral process. While AMISOM continuously works to ensure the conduct of a safe and relatively incident-free election in Somalia, the deployment of AMISOM forces to Cadaado in late October 2016 created an enabling environment for international observers to monitor the election, a key step towards safeguarding the credibility of the election and the legitimacy of its outcome. AMISOM also secured

the Hirshabelle state formation process and the inauguration of its President as part of the ongoing efforts to provide protection to the Somali authorities.

22. Furthermore, considerable progress has been registered in the conduct of a comprehensive review of the current status of friendly forces throughout the AMISOM area of responsibility, including their capabilities to undertake effective operations. In this respect, the assessment and verification of the national army was completed in sectors 2, 3, 4 and 6. The leadership of the national army has since pledged to urgently undertake the same process in sectors 1 and 5.

23. In line with the revised concept of operations and tasks outlined in United Nations Security Council resolution 2297 (2016), AMISOM convened the second joint conference of United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia sector commanders and Somalia National Army regional commanders, during the period under review. Despite making remarkable progress, AMISOM still faces serious challenges, including limited capability to counter improvised explosive devices; inadequate strength of the national army in some areas and lack of lethal support for the national army, which hinder its capacity to assume security responsibilities for liberated areas; lack of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets to provide real-time information to counter Al-Shabaab activities; and the persistent defection of some members of the national army to Al-Shabaab, taking with them operational vehicles and weapons.

24. There were, however, limitations with regard to carrying out major offensive operations to flush out Al-Shabaab militants from their main bases and strongholds, especially in the Juba River Valley and along the north-eastern coastline of Somalia. The limitation was mainly due to three factors: lack of adequate force strength that is required to simultaneously hold the areas already captured and the force to launch the offensive; lack of the requisite force multipliers and enablers (to date only three helicopters have been acquired from the Government of Kenya); and lack of requisite logistics support for the forces earmarked for the operations.

VIII. Stabilization and humanitarian situation

25. Stabilization activities along the political, non-military and socioeconomic lines of action continue to progress through the restoration of governance structures, security, the rule of law and community peace dividends projects in the newly recovered districts and beyond. The training and validation activities of district peace and stability committees are taking place in the districts of Hudur, Barawa, Warshiekh and Bulo Burto. The committees continue to play vital roles in reconciliation efforts at the grass-roots level through the promotion of peaceful coexistence and the prevention of violence and conflict among the communities, while at the same time building consensual approaches to addressing pressing issues through community consultations. Likewise, AMISOM continues to support the ongoing efforts to implement the Wadajir National Framework, a nationwide local governance framework that provides for the formation of district councils in all of the federal member states, critical for strengthening local governance systems and improving service delivery.

26. While noticeable progress has been registered in the stabilization activities highlighted above, the humanitarian situation in Somalia has remained extremely

challenging. Somalia is experiencing growing humanitarian needs emanating from drought conditions and population displacement and with regard to returnees. Unfortunately, these needs are competing for diminishing resources from the international community. Overall, and despite the lack of adequate resources and the low levels of humanitarian and early recovery action throughout southern central Somalia, AMISOM, in collaboration with the Federal Government of Somalia and the humanitarian community, continue to facilitate the conduct of humanitarian needs assessments in its areas of operation and the delivery of humanitarian assistance in areas that have been secured from Al-Shabaab.

IX. Support from the United Nations Support Office in Somalia to the operations of the African Union Mission in Somalia

27. UNSOS continues to provide logistical support to AMISOM in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolution 2297 (2016), which mandates UNSOS to provide a logistics support package to 22,126 AMISOM uniformed personnel and 70 AMISOM civilian personnel. The support, based on 17 line items, which has consistently enabled AMISOM to expand its operations across the entire mission area, has largely been satisfactory, except for a few areas requiring further streamlining.

28. Whereas significant progress has been made in the provision of rations to the authorized personnel strength, their delivery continued to rely on expensive and unsustainable air transportation in areas where the main supply routes remain impassable due to a variety of factors, ranging from the threat posed by improvised explosive devices, the poor road network and frequent Al-Shabaab ambushes of AMISOM convoys. This points to an urgent need for AMISOM to be equipped with the capability to counter improvised explosive devices and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities.

29. With regard to transport, the delay in establishing maintenance facilities in all sectors, coupled with difficulties in the timely acquisition of spare parts, has been a major hindrance to the Mission's overall maintenance and repair capacity. This has particularly affected certain operational vehicles, whose serviceability remains considerably below the minimum acceptable operational threshold of 75 per cent. The UNSOS procurement system may need to adopt a more flexible policy in order to adapt to the demands of a peace enforcement mission such as AMISOM.

30. The UNSOS engineering service has registered noticeable success in terms of accommodation and infrastructure development. However, the construction of pending sector hubs, as well as streamlining the prioritization of accommodation works between AMISOM and UNSOS, remains a challenge. Likewise, the provision of bulk and potable water remains a challenge and requires immediate intervention. The provision of fuel and lubricants has steadily progressed within the prescribed timelines and quantities. Nonetheless, UNSOS should engage AMISOM on issues relating to the airlift of fuel in compliance with the memorandum of understanding and the 2016 concept of operations guidelines.

X. Observations

31. AMISOM remains a central actor in the pursuit of peace, security and stability in Somalia. I would like the Council to consider the following aspects as crucial to the important security gains made thus far in Somalia.

32. First, sustained resources (equipment, logistics and funding) have not matched the sacrifices made by AMISOM troops. Despite the difficult but compelling accomplishments made by AMISOM, the Mission remains arguably the most under-resourced one, in comparison with similar asymmetrical operations within or beyond Africa. The dedicated support funding from the European Union towards AMISOM troop allowances was unfortunately reduced by 20 per cent, which has created unintended negative consequences, including the prospect of the possible withdrawal by troop-contributing countries of their troops from Somalia. This was clearly stated by the Heads of State of troop-contributing countries at the meeting held in Djibouti on 28 February and clearly demonstrated in a letter dated 8 December 2016 from the Government of Burundi addressed to the African Union Commission. This possibility will indeed be a tragedy, not only for Somalia, but for regional and international peace and security. Accordingly, the African Union Commission, through the Commissioner for Peace and Security, has taken steps to remedy the situation. These measures include consultations with the European Union and a resource mobilization drive in the Middle East, including Iran, the United Nations, Europe and Russia. In addition, the African Union Commission continues to underscore that the most sustainable funding for AMISOM can best be attained through the utilization of United Nations assessed contributions. The Council may wish to reiterate this position for the consideration of the United Nations Security Council. In the meantime, it is important that the European Union desist from discriminating in the payment procedures relating to all AMISOM troop-contributing countries, as set out in the outcome document of the 21st meeting of the Military Operations Coordination Committee, held on 11 November 2016. For AMISOM to undertake substantial security operations and flush out Al-Shabaab from its strongholds, including the Juba River Valley and along the north-eastern coastline, it requires a troop surge of 4,500 troops, fully supported, for a non-renewable period of six months. The success of this operation will enable the opening up of the main supply routes into those lush agricultural areas that are the food baskets of Somalia. It will also allow the delivery of humanitarian assistance and extension of governance to those areas.

33. Second, the political developments, especially in the electoral process as conducted, are encouraging, but the authorities of the Federal Government of Somalia should be encouraged to finalize this process no later than January 2017, based on the revised timelines. In this respect, the people and Government of Somalia should be congratulated for the establishment of the Tenth Parliament. At the same time, any alleged irregularities in the conduct of the electoral process should be promptly investigated and appropriate remedial actions must be taken in order to maintain the integrity of the electoral process.

34. Third, the African Union Commission and AMISOM remain committed towards a comprehensive approach to peace and security in Somalia. This approach should be based on a set of security indicators ranging from restoring state authority to the need

for countering violent extremism. However, the successful implementation of a comprehensive approach to security must be inclusive of AMISOM in all its aspects. This is why it is necessary for the Council to pronounce itself on the necessity for a collaborative process led by the Federal Government of Somalia and closely supported by AMISOM and other relevant partners in the effective implementation of a comprehensive approach to peace and security in Somalia.

35. Indeed, I would like to pay tribute to all AMISOM troop- and police-contributing countries and the Mission's personnel for the sacrifices that they continue to make in service of the continent. The African Union Commission will continue to firmly stand in full support and solidarity with them as we seek to ensure the elimination of acts and threats of terrorism against the people of Somalia.

36. In conclusion, I wish to commend the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Hailemariam Desalegn, in his capacity as Chair of IGAD, and the member States of IGAD, for their illustrious contributions towards peace in Somalia and the region.